



## FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETINGS 2024/25

### MINUTES OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETING Held at 5pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 Accrington and Rossendale College, Room H004

**Board Members present:**

Phil Wilkinson (Chair), Helen Curtis (Corporation Vice Chair), David Whatley (Corporation Vice Chair), Lisa O’Loughlin (Principal and CEO), Steve Campbell, Chris Kenyon, Melissa Conlon, Liz Sedgley, Gemma Marsh, Sarah Applewhite, Arif Ahmad, Aqil Javed (Staff Governor), Emily Jayne Austin (Student Governor) and Simone Hartley-Gott (Student Governor).

**In attendance:**

David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)  
Tracey Baron (Group Executive Director – Quality)  
Leyanne Fitzmaurice (Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Support)  
Fionnuala Swann (Vice Principal – Academic Curriculum)  
Morag Davis (Group Executive Director - Strategy and Transformation)  
Andy Parkin (Vice Principal – Technical and Adult Education)  
Joy Sharpe (Vice Principal - Quality)  
Louise Marsden (Vice Principal – Marketing and Brand Strategy)  
Andrew Dewhurst (Vice Principal – Sales and Partnerships)  
Sam Mercer (Assistant Principal – Performance and Planning)

Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance)  
Jenifer Burden MBE (observer)  
Karen Musgrave (Partner at RSM) to the end of item 2

**Item 1.**

**1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence**

Phil Wilkinson (Chair of the Corporation) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Special welcome was shared with Jenifer Burden MBE, who was observing the meeting, ahead of her beginning her term of office as a new Corporation Member in January 2025.

Apologies for the Board meeting were received from the following Board members: Darren Hutton, and Gill Sharples (Staff Governor). The Director of Governance confirmed quoracy.

**1.2 Declarations of Interest**

Members and officers present declared they had no interests, personal, fiduciary, or otherwise in any item on the open agenda for the meeting – with the exception of:

- Item 5.5 which relates to Pendle Education Trust (PET), therefore David Whatley and Steve Campbell will step out

**1.3 Minutes of the Previous Corporation Meeting (14<sup>th</sup> October 2024)**

*Submitted: Draft minutes (circulated in meeting papers)*

The draft minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Board of Corporation meeting were reviewed by the Board, and approved as an accurate record, for the signature of the Chair.

**Resolved: To approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**1.4 Matters Arising**

*Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)*

*Presented by Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance)*

The Board received and reviewed the Matters Arising log. Additionally, it was noted that the Board had received and approved the External Review of Governance (ERG) report from Rockborn in its earlier Part 2 meeting today, with members acknowledging and welcoming the significant assurance received through the robust process and resulting report.

**Resolved: That the Board:**

- **receive and note the Matters Arising**
- **note the approval of the External Review of Governance (ERG) report received from Rockborn, and significant assurance within**

**Item 2.**

**Annual Financial Statements and Year-End Matters 2023/24**

*Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)*

*Presented by David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)*

Karen Musgrave (Partner, RSM Audit) was welcomed into the meeting. The Deputy Principal prefaced the item by sharing his thanks with Claire Jarvis (Assistant Principal – Finance and HR), the leadership team, Judith Dand (Finance Manager) and the Finance team for their work on the annual financial statements for 2023/24 shared today for Board approval. It was noted that the finalisation of statements is almost complete and there had been no significant changes in funding or position to that previously reported to the Board. These are the first consolidated accounts for the Group, and include information related to the financial position and performance of the Group's 2 subsidiary companies – with the subsidiary company financial statements having been approved by their respective Board of Directors. The Board noted that, subject to the Board's considerations today, certified/signed financial statements (and accompanying returns) are expected to be filed with the ESFA by 31 December 2024.

Having regard to Audit Code of Practice (ACoP) best practice requirements, the Board welcomed that Karen Musgrave was in attendance today to present an overview and take any questions from Board members. In respects of the audit management report, the summary provided drew member's attention to areas such as: the status and overview of the audit, final materiality and unadjusted misstatements, audit risk findings, other audit risks, management judgements and accounting estimates, follow-up on prior year control recommendations, recommendations on controls and related disclosures. Explanation was provided on the treatment of the energy asset for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) across the subsidiary and Group accounts. As RSM are finalising income audit work, Chairs action to finalise the accounts was appropriate, and [it was agreed](#) that the finalised accounts and audit management report would be circulated to Board outside of the meeting post-submission to ESFA.

	<p><b>Following consideration, and in line with recommendations from the Audit Committee, the Board resolved to approve:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The annual financial statements 2023/24</li> <li>b) The financial statements/regularity audit management report issued by RSM</li> <li>c) The letters of representation</li> <li>d) for the Chair and Principal to physically or digitally certify the documents as necessary on their behalf</li> </ol> <p>The Board received and noted the RSM Emerging Issues Report (Autumn 2024), and thanked Karen Musgrave for RSM's support and her attendance at the meeting.</p> <p><i>Karen Musgrave (RSM Audit) left the meeting</i></p>
<p><b>Item 3.</b></p>	<p><b>Principal's Report (including Key Performance Indicators KPIs)</b></p> <p><i>Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)</i>  <i>Presented by Lisa O'Loughlin (Principal and CEO)</i></p> <p>The Principal noted that since the reports issue, the College Group had been inspected by Ofsted, with the Part 2 meeting prior to this meeting having briefed members on the outcome, learning from the inspection process and next steps. The draft inspection report would be received by the College for factual accuracy check in early January 2025, and report publication would be the trigger for celebrating the Outstanding grade. The Principal took the opportunity to again recognise and thank the 2 nominees (Tracey Baron and Morag Davis), leadership team and all staff for their phenomenal approach throughout the inspection and demonstration of Group values – with thanks also shared with the Chair and Board for their support and contributions in the inspection. This was echoed by the Chair and Board, who shared their pride in staff, students and the outcome achieved.</p> <p>The Principal's Report was reviewed by exception, with key headlines and active review in the meeting focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant improvements in the vast majority of College Strategic Areas for Improvement (Afls) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engineering 65.7% achievement in 2022/23 increased to 79.9%</li> <li>- Foundation programmes 97.3% achievement in 2022/23 increased to 98.6%</li> <li>- Access to Higher Education (HE) Health and Social Care increased from 80% in 2022/23 to 90%</li> <li>- Apprenticeship Standards increased from 57.7% to 68.5%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ongoing focus on attendance, which currently stands at 89% across both campus</li> <li>• Confirmation and update on the 4 new College Group Strategic Afls (Engineering; Beauty Therapy; Level 1 Functional Skills Maths, and also Law, Justice and Protective Services)</li> <li>• Current and projected recruitment position (HE recruitment shortfall of 60 students against target; 16-18 numbers R04 position shortfall of 45 students) and ongoing action to address this year reviewed, as well as implications for financial planning and lagged funding</li> <li>• Student and Staff Voice themes and actions</li> <li>• Strategic Review update, including evidence of 'green shoots' of improvement in applications</li> </ul> <p>In relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the current performance position was reviewed, and consideration given to a recommendation from the Leadership Team for changes to a small number of 2024/25 KPI targets. It was noted that latest performance information had been considered for a systematic review of all indicators, with any</p>

	<p>recommendations made for increases or adjustments being accompanied by a supporting rationale. Members carefully considered the recommendations and discussed the need for ongoing high ambitions, within a realistic framework and continued focus on increased ambition in targets where possible. The Board were clear that alongside the quality and relevance of provision, student numbers remain a key priority and critical focus in the 2030 Strategic Plan and 2024/25 year to support ongoing financial sustainability and the ability to invest.</p> <p>Members asked for clarity on the financial implications of any revised KPIs if they are agreed. It was confirmed that changes would be reflected in the mid-year position to be reported at the next Board meeting, with consideration given to any actions needed to reflect financial pressures due to adjusted income. An update was requested and received on the impact of the school’s liaison strategy and timings for traction, with the Principal confirming the ambition of growth from September 2025. Members asked how learning from the very recent Ofsted inspection had been considered, and this was explained in relation to GCSE English and maths, with the recommended revision to the relevant KPI also reflecting a change in student characteristics and prior achievement.</p> <p>The Board noted that KPIs for 2025/26 and 2026/27 had been approved previously as part of the 2030 Strategic Plan. When KPIs for 2025/26 are shared for Board approval in the annual planning cycle, consideration will need to be given against those where there has been an adjusted KPI in 2024/25 to support delivery of Board ambitions.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) receive and note the Principal’s Report, and key updates within</li> <li>b) approve revised Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2024/25</li> </ul>								
Item 4.	<p><b>Strategic Discussions</b></p> <p><b><u>4.1 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2023/24</u></b>  <i>Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)</i>  <i>Presented by Tracey Baron (Group Executive Director – Quality) and Joy Sharpe (Vice Principal – Quality)</i></p> <p>The Group Executive Director (GED) confirmed that the Strategic Self-Assessment Report (SAR) had been considered by Quality and Standards Committee at their 18 November 2024 meeting, with feedback incorporated in the draft Executive Summary and 4 contributing provision strategic SARs shared today. Board members were thanked for confirming attendance at the SAR validation sessions in January 2025, a key input to support and challenge, and Board contribution to quality assurance. The SARs and supporting report had been written ahead of Ofsted inspection, which had provided additional and valued assurance and feedback for consideration in final grading. The main areas of focus and review were the recommended grades and robustness of supporting evidence:</p> <p><u>Key Strengths:</u></p> <p>Overall Effectiveness - Grade 1 Outstanding</p> <p>Key Judgements:</p> <table data-bbox="277 1832 866 1973"> <tr> <td>Quality of Education</td> <td>Grade 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Behaviour and Attitudes</td> <td>Grade 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Personal Development</td> <td>Grade 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leadership and Management</td> <td>Grade 1</td> </tr> </table> <p>Provision Type Grades:  Education Programmes for Young People: Grade 1</p>	Quality of Education	Grade 1	Behaviour and Attitudes	Grade 1	Personal Development	Grade 1	Leadership and Management	Grade 1
Quality of Education	Grade 1								
Behaviour and Attitudes	Grade 1								
Personal Development	Grade 1								
Leadership and Management	Grade 1								

	<p>Adult Learning Programmes: Grade 1  Apprenticeships: Grade 2  Provision for Learners with High Needs: Grade 1</p> <p>5 strategic Afls had been identified, as set out above, with an additional divisional Afl in construction to support continuing ongoing rapid and sustained improvement.</p> <p>The Board considered and tested the rationale that in Quality and Standards Committee, apprenticeships had been proposed and supported to self-assess as grade 1 outstanding, however was now proposed as ‘good’. The Group Executive Director shared insight gained through the recent Ofsted inspection and reminded that the SAR looks backwards and is the previous year. The robustness of the Group’s internal self-assessment cycle was discussed and supported. While there is evidence that outcomes for apprenticeships are outstanding, in view of the recent inspection, the self-assessment should reflect the monitoring of apprenticeship progress needs to be fully embedded so that the progress and achievements of all apprentices in every standard is always consistently challenged and supported for rapid improvement. Members welcomed the openness of discussion, demonstration of the Group’s value that ‘we don’t stop at good enough’ and commended the leadership team for apprenticeships for their impact, which had been acknowledged in the inspection.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board receive the report and approve the self-assessment grading and key strengths and areas for improvement (Afls) emerging from 2023/24 curriculum performance</b></p> <p><b><u>4.2 Skills Position Statement</u></b>  <i>Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)</i>  <i>Morag Davis (Group Executive Director – Strategy and Transformation)</i></p> <p>Members reflected on the review and consideration in the earlier Part 2 Board meeting of the draft Skills Position Statement and approved its adoption. The Group Executive Director was thanked for her work and leadership to develop a robust strategy which clearly sets out the Group’s skills strategy objectives within the wider Strategic Review and framework of the Group’s 2030 Strategic Plan. It was noted that Quality and Standards Committee will be updated on implementation of the Skills Position Statement. 2025/26 will see the further establishment of additional industry-led hubs focusing on sector skills to drive the intensive ongoing developments in employer-led curriculum. Members welcomed that a five-year curriculum innovation plan has been developed to provide a pipeline of talent into Lancashire’s businesses to meet future skills needs, particularly in digital and cyber.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Board receive the report and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>approve the Skills Position Statement, and support its implementation</b></li> <li>b) <b>note the development of a five-year curriculum innovation plan</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Item 5.</b></p>	<p><b>Items to receive or approve</b></p> <p><b><u>5.1 Finance Report</u></b>  <i>Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)</i>  <i>Presented by David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)</i></p> <p>The Deputy Principal drew out key headlines from the Finance Report, which updated the Corporation on the financial performance and position of the College Group against the budget approved in July 2024, as at 31 October 2024. A recommended approach to a 2024/25 pay award was also set out for consideration.</p>

The financial KPIs were reported as follows:

**Table 3: Summary financial performance at 31 October 2024**

Financial performance measure	Actual YTD	Current Forecast	Budget /Target	Variance Projected cf Budget/ Target	RAG	Movement	Strategic target	Prior Year
Education Specific EBITDA as % of income	6.5%	3.9%	3.9%	0.0		↓	>=6%	4.5%
Borrowing as a % of income	14.1%	14.6%	14.6%	0.0		↔	<20%	5.2%
Cash days in hand	126	94	100	(6)		↔	>75	99
Adjusted current ratio	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.0		↔	>/=2.0	1.9
Staff costs as a % of income	67.3%	69.5%	69.8%	-0.3		↔	</=70%	68.6%
Staff Utilisation	95%	97%	97%	0.0		↔	</=97%	97%
Financial covenants overall compliance	Yes	Yes	Yes	-		↔	Yes	Yes
ESFA Financial Health category	Good	Good	Good	-		↔	>/=Good	Good

In relation to the Corporation's 6% EBITDA aspiration, it was noted there are challenges in the short-term, therefore the budget is 4% this year with the aspiration to move back to 6%+ next year. The cost base continues to be closely managed, particularly given income pressures. Members considered the implications of EBITDA being below 6%, noting that a minimum of 3% is needed to replenish capital and digital investment, with the sector average being 7%. Board were assured that the update on mid-year which will be received at the next Corporation meeting will include a costed programme to achieve that trajectory and manage risks in between, with clarity on any implications from a staffing perspective.

**Resolved: That the Corporation receive and note the Finance Report**

The Deputy Principal updated on local pay negotiations with the Unions recognised by the College, in respects of a 2024/25 all staff pay award. In line with Corporation approvals, the following offer had been made to the 3 Unions recognised by the College Group, for them to seek the views of their members: - all staff pay award for 2024/25 of 2.5% or £750 (pro rata) whichever is the greater, implemented on 1st January 2025.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that while Unison had accepted this offer, and represents 'support staff', the 2 Unions representing teaching staff had not accepted the offer, and they had asked for negotiations to continue. Given this different position across the 3 Unions, legal advice had been sought by the College and confirmed that while it was not preferable for a pay award to be partially implemented across the staff body (e.g. implemented for support staff, but not for teaching staff as negotiations continue) this was possible, and that there is precedence. The Deputy Principal noted that an assurance had been given to Unison that support staff would not be disadvantaged by their acceptance of the pay offer in the event of any changes arising from further negotiations. The Board noted and agreed the importance for 2024/25 of an 'equalised' general pay award % approach for all staff.

Members carefully considered the benefits and risks of such an approach, and alternatives, and collectively agreed to implement the pay offer to support staff in the College from 1st January 2025 and not impose the offer on teaching staff given the ongoing negotiations. It was hoped that a negotiated and mutually agreed position could be considered at the next Board meeting.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Board approve an all staff pay award for 2024/25 of 2.5% or £750 (pro rata) whichever is the greater, for all staff in the College Group, payable from 1st January 2025**
- **That given local negotiations on a 2024/25 pay award with the unions recognised as representing teaching staff continue, the award will only be implemented for support staff directly employed by the College Group from 1 January 2025**

**5.2 Governance Items**

**a) Governance Report**

*Submitted: Report circulated in meeting papers*

*Presented by Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance)*

The second Governance Report of the new academic year offered information to support the Board to consider an annual self-assessment against governance (in the 2023/24 academic year and up to this point) and grade its performance on the Ofsted scale. In considering, the Board reflected on the following:

- Assurance and insight within the External Board Review (EBR) independently delivered by Rockborn and considered within the part 2 meeting today, covering the 2023/24 academic year and up to this point in 2024/25
- Reflection - but not reliance on - evidence in the leadership and management element of the 2023/24 Strategic Self-Assessment Report (SAR) considered today, grading of 'Outstanding' for this element and Ofsted inspection outcome of 'Outstanding' overall, and for leadership and management
- The latest updated Governance Development Plan (GDP) shared and reviewed, evidencing significant progress and delivery of actions in-year as it has been updated and developed to support continuous improvement
- Insight through, and improvements from, key inputs into governance self-assessment in 2023/24 and up to this point, in line with the annual governance assessment cycle approved by Board and shared throughout the year such as:
  - Board self-assessment (individually and collectively) against the behaviours and best practice set out in the new AoC FE Code of Governance, adopted in-year (and supporting desk review against the Code, completed by the Director of Governance)
  - Review of Board reflections in meetings
  - Review of DfE Guidance and Policy – and any remaining actions in the prior Governance Action Plan continued forward
  - Committee Effectiveness Review
  - Annual reviews of governance structures, attendance and membership
  - Refreshed Skills Audit and self-assessment, with succession planning framework agreed with Search and Governance and principles applied by the Board in-year

Given this, the Board approved a grade of 'outstanding' for governance, and the related wording of the relevant content for the Financial Statement 2023/24. Members acknowledged and thanked the Director of Governance and Search and Governance Committee for their work throughout the period, noting the feedback and assurance in the External Governance Review on the rigour and depth of governance self-assessment, and recommendations for refinement moving forward.

**Resolved: That the Corporation receive the Governance Report and:**

- a) approve the annual self-assessment against governance (in the 2023/24 academic year and up to this point) and grade its performance on the Ofsted scale as 'outstanding'
  - b) approve this being reported in the 2023/24 Financial Statements, as above
  - c) formally note the following additional matters
- i) Application of the College Seal to the contract with Blakedown Sport and Play Ltd for the re-surfacing of the existing artificial turf sports pitch at Accrington campus, at a value of £183,968.00 (+ VAT at £36,793.60)
  - ii) Chairs Action (4<sup>th</sup> December 2024) to update reference to named individuals in the approved Stop and Search Policy and Student Criminal Conviction Policy and Procedure, to the role title
  - iii) Chairs Action (15<sup>th</sup> October 2024) following the Corporation's approval of the People Strategy at the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Board meeting, to approve on behalf of the Corporation revised HR policies ahead of their being formally considered collectively at the next Corporation meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 (Managing Performance Policy, Recruitment of ex-Offenders Policy Statement; DBS Policy; Recruitment and Selection Policy)
  - iv) Passing of the written resolution dated 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024, with the Corporation approving the following appointments after a request from the Pendle Education Trust (PET), as the PET's Sponsor:
    - Fionnuala Swann as the Sponsor Trustee, initially for a 12-month period and then to be reviewed
    - Jonathan Devereux as a sponsor appointed trustee for a 4-year term
    - Ruth England as a sponsor appointed trustee for a 4-year term
    - Dean Langton as a sponsor appointed trustee for a further 4-year term
    - David Whatley as a sponsor appointed trustee for a further 4-year term
    - Rob Pheasey as a sponsor appointed trustee for a further 4-year term

**b) Subsidiary End of Year Report**

*Submitted: Report circulated in meeting papers*

*Presented by David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)*

End of year report for the 2 subsidiary companies (NCC Professional Services Ltd and NCC Energy Services Ltd) received and reviewed. Board noted the updates on the financial position and performance, that the financial statements for 2023/24 had been approved by the company Directors, as well as the latest position on membership and governance approach.

**Resolved: That the Corporation receive and note the Subsidiary End of Year Report**

**c) Triple A Report – and recommendations from Committees**

*Submitted: Report circulated in meeting papers*

*Presented by Committee Chairs*

The Triple A report was presented by Committee Chairs and offered an alert, assure and advise update against the following Committee meetings: Audit Committee (25<sup>th</sup> November 2024), Quality and Standards Committee (18<sup>th</sup> November 2024), Remuneration Committee (27<sup>th</sup> November 2024) and Capital and Estates Committee (7<sup>th</sup> October 2024). It was noted that confidential matters from the Remuneration Committee meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were considered in the Part 2 Board of Corporation meeting today.

**Resolved: That the Corporation receive the Triple A report, note the content and update provided by Committee Chairs, and in line with Committee recommendations:**

Audit Committee:

Approve:

- a) The 2023/24 Internal Audit Annual Report
- b) The 2023/24 Annual Report of the Audit Committee
- c) Finalised 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan
- d) Revised terms of reference for the Audit Committee

Note the 'matters for referral' from the Committee to the other Committees, and approve consideration of the College's Investment Strategy in the programme for future internal audits (risk appetite, significant capital investments etc)

Quality and Standards Committee:

- a) Approve revised Higher Education Advisory Board (HEAB) Membership and Terms of Reference, and the HE Student Complaints and Appeals Annual Report
- b) Note the annual review of the Committee's terms of reference, and that there are no recommendations for changes

Remuneration Committee:

- a) Approve the 2023/24 Remuneration Annual Report, and its publication
- b) Receive and note the new 'Effective Senior Postholder Appraisal and Chair Performance Review' guidance from the FE Commissioner, and approve development of an 'Appraisal and Performance Policy' for its consideration
- c) Approve revised Committee terms of reference

**5.3 Careers Annual Report**

*Submitted: Report and summary slides circulated in meeting papers*

*Presented by Leyanne Fitzmaurice (Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Support) and Gemma Marsh (Lead Governor for Skills and Careers)*

The report was summarised by the Assistant Principal and Lead Governor, to update and assure the Board in relation to its statutory duties and ambitions for careers. Careers is a key priority for the College Group, and at the heart of the 2030 Strategic Plan, with the Group's Strategic Curriculum Intent having careers at its core: 'Career focused' 'Right programme for every learner' and 'Destinations beyond qualifications'.

The report and discussions in the meeting covered: the Board's statutory role; importance of the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Careers Guidance; need to ensure independent careers guidance is provided to all students up to and including 18 years of age and to students aged up to 25 with an education, health and care plan; and, need to hold the nationally recognised matrix standard for quality in the provision of information and guidance. It was also noted that the DfE's FE College Corporations Governance Guide recommends that College Corporations should oversee the College's development of a rich and comprehensive strategic careers plan; designate a governor to take a particular strategic interest in careers guidance and also look for opportunities to maximise the College's connections to employers and professional people, in order to enhance students' career aspirations. An update was provided on the strategy and implementation against each of these aspects.

The Lead Governor shared how Skills and Careers connect in the College Group and updated on assurance she has gained through her Lead role. A Careers Strategy is in development and will return for Board consideration and approval. Forward approach includes responding to 'Get Britain Working; Supported Employment Model', which sets

out reforms to bring health and skills together to get more people into and on in work. Board was supportive of the planned introduction of a new Careers Impact System in Spring term, and implementation of the Quality in Careers Standard in 2025/26. Members were pleased to note that full matrix standard accreditation is in place, and received headlines on Learner Voice related to Careers, all of which was in the upper quartile.

It was agreed that headlines from the recently published Devolution White Paper will be shared with the Board, following a discussion on implications and opportunities, the reform of Jobcentre Plus and development of the College's in-work progression model in readiness. Feedback was welcomed on this first annual report, and it was well received, with additional assurance having been noted as being provided to Board through online briefing sessions in-year.

**Resolved: That the Corporation receive and note the annual Careers Report**

#### **5.4 Policies Requiring Board approval**

*Submitted: Policies circulated ahead of the meeting, and in the meeting papers  
Presented by Senior Leadership Team*

Members had received policies requiring Board approval ahead of the meeting, with the opportunity to submit questions ahead. In relation to the Information Security Policy, members asked for assurance on coverage of the DPO role and responsibilities when they are away from College, and this was confirmed, with active monitoring of the inbox and support across the leadership team to ensure cover.

**Resolved: That the Corporation approve the following policies/procedures:**

- **Fitness to Study**
- **Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**
- **Death of a Student**
- **Local Recognition and Procedural Agreement Policy**
- **Recruitment and Selection**
- **Managing Performance**
- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**
- **Data Breach Notification Procedure**
- **Data Retention Policy**
- **Information Security Policy (Data Breach)**

#### **5.5 Pendle Education Trust (PET) Sponsor Update**

*Submitted: Policies circulated ahead of the meeting, and in the meeting papers  
Presented by Fionnuala Swann (Vice Principal – Academic Curriculum)*

*David Whatley and Steve Campbell (Board Members) left the meeting*

The Vice Principal summarised the annual update report provided by the PET to the Corporation, given the College's role as the Sponsor. Updates from the PET covered vision and values, admissions, quality and standards, context, pupil premium, English as another language, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and secondary destinations for 2023 and 2024. The Vice Principal updated that in terms of the Sponsor relationship, she is working with the Trust Chief Executive to develop an action plan for 2025/26 setting out key areas of joint opportunity and interest between the College Group and Trust, which will be supported by a Memorandum of Understanding if needed. This will be in place for the end of this academic year. The Board supported the approach, and asked for and received assurance on the strengthening of relationships between the College and the schools in the PET.

	<p>In relation to membership, the Board approved the recruitment of 2 new Members for the PET, to replace Debbie Corcoran and Gemma Marsh, with recommendations on appointments to return to a future Corporation meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved: That the Corporation receive the update report from the Pendle Education Trust (PET) and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) agree the development of an action plan and supporting Memorandum of Understanding if needed, with the PET for the 2024/25 academic year</li> <li>b) approve recruitment of 2 new Members, with recommendations on appointments to return to a future Corporation meeting</li> </ul> <p><i>David Whatley and Steve Campbell (Board Members) returned to the meeting, and Simone Hartley-Gott left.</i></p>
<p><b>Item 6.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Closing Section – Reflections on the meeting, review of risks and any other business</u></b></p> <p>There were no items of any other business.</p> <p>Helen Curtis (Corporation Vice Chair) led the review of reflections against the meeting and on key risks emerging, which will be considered in the ongoing review of the Risk Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Risk Register required in light of Ofsted inspection and outcome</li> <li>• Significant assurance through the External Governance Review (EGR) and annual self-assessment of governance</li> <li>• Latest financial position to be reflected, including student numbers and mitigations such as School Strategy</li> <li>• Assurance through the Strategic Self Assessments (SARs) and clear and rigorous quality assurance cycle and process, with oversight by Quality and Standards Committee – areas for improvement and assurance clear, risks in relation to self assessment grading thoroughly considered</li> <li>• Legal advice received to mitigate any risks in relation to partial implementation of pay award</li> </ul> <p>The Chair shared his thanks with the Board and leadership team for a successful 2024, ending on a high after inspection, and expressed he looked forward to continued working together for an equally successful and impactful 2025. The meeting was closed.</p>

**Debbie Corcoran**  
**Director of Governance**

**Signed as an accurate record by the Chair of Corporation**



**Name:** Phil Wilkinson  
**Date:** 10 March 2025